ffom International agencies. The number of domestic participants in the seminar was 113. Besides this, a total of 135 participants from Jute Mills, enterpreneurs, R&D/HRD/Promotional organisations & others displayed their products and other developments in the Expo.

(c) and (d) In the inaugural speech, it was informed that there is a proposal to include jute industry as part of the Technology Upgradation Fund proposed to be created by Government of India for covering the entire textile industry. Details of the Fund are being worked out.

Purchase Centres of Jute Corporation of India in West Bengal

140. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of purchase centres of Jute Corporation of India (JCI) in West Bengal;

(b) the number of purchase centres in operation in the month of July, August, September and October, 1997;

(c) whether about 100 centres were idle in the month of September, and the Jute growers were left at the mercy of the middlemen to sell raw jute much below the MSP level;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) if not, the month-wise factual position from July, 1997 till date vis-a-vis the price in the market?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) JCI is operating through 96 purchase Centres in West Bengal.

(b) The number of purchase Centres in operation from the month of July, 1997 onwards are given below:—

Month	No. of operational Purchase Centres
July	20
August	69
September	92
October	96

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The month-wise factual position from July, 1997 till 11.11.1997 is given below:—

Month	Procurement in W.B. (bales of 180 Kgs.)	Purchase Centres in operation in West Bengal.	Ruling Market rates (Rs./Qtls.)	
			South B.	North B.
			TD-5	TD-5
July	582	20	580.00	603.00
August	60418	69	622.00	664.00
Sept.	122333	92	606.00	615.00
October	129167	96	620.00	624.00
Nov. (upto—11.11.'97)	34444		630.00	661.00
Minimum Support Price			626.00	620.50